

Rituximab plus lenalidomide effective in follicular lymphoma

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(HealthDay)—Rituximab plus lenalidomide has similar efficacy to

rituximab plus chemotherapy among patients with previously untreated follicular lymphoma, according to a study published in the Sept. 6 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Franck Morschhauser, M.D., Ph.D., from the University of Lille in France, and colleagues conducted an international, randomized phase 3 trial to evaluate rituximab plus lenalidomide (513 patients) versus rituximab plus chemotherapy (one of three rituximab-based regimens; 517 patients) in patients with previously untreated follicular [lymphoma](#). Both regimens were followed by rituximab maintenance therapy. Follow-up continued to 120 weeks.

The researchers found that the rate of confirmed or unconfirmed complete response at 120 weeks was similar in the two groups: 48 percent in the rituximab-lenalidomide group versus 53 percent in the rituximab-chemotherapy group ($P = 0.13$). The interim three-year rate of progression-free survival was also similar (77 versus 78 percent). In the rituximab-chemotherapy group, a higher percentage of patients had grade 3 or 4 neutropenia (50 versus 32 percent) and febrile neutropenia (7 versus 2 percent) of any grade. A higher percentage of patients in the rituximab-lenalidomide group had grade 3 or 4 cutaneous reactions (7 versus 1 percent).

"Among [patients](#) with previously untreated follicular lymphoma, efficacy results were similar with rituximab plus lenalidomide and [rituximab](#) plus chemotherapy," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to pharmaceutical companies, including Celgene, which manufactures [lenalidomide](#) and funded the study.

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